

1568/733.
RULES AND ADVICES

TO THE

C L E R G Y

OF THE

D I O C E S E O F

D O W N A N D C O N N E R:

FOR THEIR DEPARTMENT IN THEIR PERSONAL AND PUBLICK CAPACITIES.

Given by JER. TAYLOR, Bishop of that Diocess, at the visitation at LISNE-GARVEY.

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IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF

ATTEST

THIS 11TH DAY OF MAY



RULES AND ADVICES

T O T H E

C L E R G Y.

I.

Personal Duty.

REMEMBER that it is your great duty, and tied on you by many obligations, that you be exemplar in your lives, and be patterns and presidents to your flocks: lest it be said unto you, 'Why takest thou my law into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest to be reformed thereby.' He that lives an idle life may preach with truth and reason, or as did the Pharisees; but

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not as Christ, or as one having authority.

II.

Every minister in taking accounts of his life, must judge of his duty by more strict and severer measures, than he does of his people; and he that ties heavy burthens upon others, ought himself to carry the heaviest end: and many things may be lawful in them, which he must not suffer in himself.

III.

Let every minister endeavour to be learned in all spiritual wisdom, and skilful in the things of God; for he will ill teach others the way of godliness, perfectly, that is him-

self a babe and uninstructed. An ignorant minister is an head without an eye; and an evil minister is salt that hath no favour.

IV.

Every minister, above all things, must be careful that he be not a servant of passion, whether of anger or desire. For he that is not a master of his passions will always be useless, and quickly will become contemptible and cheap in the eyes of his parish.

V.

Let no minister be litigious in any thing; not greedy or covetous; not insisting upon little things, or quarreling for, or exacting of every minute portion of

his dues; but bountiful and easie; remitting of his right, when to do so may be useful to his people, or when the contrary may do mischief, and cause reproach. *Be not over righteous* (saith Solomon) that is, not severe in demanding, or forcing every thing, though it be indeed his due.

VI.

Let not the name of the church be made a pretence for personal covetousness; by saying, you are willing to remit many things, but you must not wrong the church: for though it be true, that you are not to do prejudice to succession, yet many things may be forgiven upon just occasions, from which the church shall receive no incom-

modity; but be sure that there are but few things which thou art bound to do in thy personal capacity, but the same also, and more, thou art obliged to perform, as thou art a public person.

VII.

Never exact the offerings, or customary wages, and such as are allowed by law, in the ministrati-
on of the sacraments, nor condition for them, nor secure them beforehand; but first do your office, and minister the sacraments purely, readily, and for Christ's sake; and when that is done, receive what is your due.

VIII.

Avoid all pride, as you would

flee from the most frightful apparition, or the most cruel enemy; and remember that you can never truly teach humility, or tell what it is, unless you practise it yourselves.

IX.

Take no measures of humility, but such as are material and tangible; such which consist not in humble words, and lowly gestures; but what is first truly radicated in your souls, in low opinion of yourselves, and in real preferring others before yourselves, and in such significations, which can neither deceive yourselves nor others.

X.

Let every curate of souls strive

to understand himself best; and then to understand others. Let him spare himself least; but most severely judge, censure, and condemn himself. If he be learned, let him shew it by wise teaching, and humble manners. If he be not learned, let him be sure to get so much knowledge as to know that; and so much humility, as not to grow insolent, and puffed up by his emptiness. For many will pardon a good man that is less learned; but if he be proud, no man will forgive him.

XI.

Let every minister be careful to live a life as abstracted from the affairs of the world, as his necessity will permit him; but at no

10 RULES AND ADVICES

hand to be immerged and principally imployed in the affairs of the world: what cannot be avoided, and what is of good report, and what he is obliged to by any personal or collateral duty, that he may do, but no more. Ever remembering the saying of our blessed Lord: 'In the world ye shall have trouble; but in me ye shall have peace:' and consider this also, which is a great truth; that every degree of love to the world, is so much taken from the love of God.

XII.

Be no otherwise solicitous of your fame and reputation, but by doing your duty well and wisely: in other things, refer yourself to

God: but if you meet with evil tongues, be careful that you bear reproaches sweetly and temperately.

XIII.

Remember that no minister can govern his people well, and prosperously, unless himself hath learned humbly and chearfully to obey his superior. For every minister should be like the good centurion in the Gospel: himself is under authority, and he hath people under him.

XIV.

Be sure in all your words and actions to preserve Christian simplicity and ingenuity; to do to others, as you would be done un-

to yourself; and never to speak what you do not think. Trust to truth, rather than to your memory: for this may fail you, that will never.

XV.

Pray much and very fervently, for all your parishioners, and all men that belong to you, and all that belong to God; but especially for the conversion of souls; and be very zealous for nothing, but for God's glory, and the salvation of the world, and particularly of your charges: ever remembering that you are by God appointed, as the ministers of prayer, and the ministers of good things, to pray for all the world, and to heal all the world, as far as you are able,

XVI.

Every minister must learn and practise patience; that by bearing all adversity meekly, and humbly, and chearfully, and by doing all his duty with unwearied industry, with great courage, constancy, and Christian magnanimity, he may the better assist his people in the bearing of their crosses, and overcoming their difficulties.

XVII.

He that is holy, let him be holy still, and still more holy, and never think he hath done his work, till all be finished by perseverance, and the measures of perfection in a holy life, and a holy death: but at no hand must he

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magnify himself by vain separations from others, or despising them that are not so holy.

II.

Of Prudence required in Ministers.

XVIII.

I. **R**EMEMBER that discretion is the mistress of all graces; and humility is the greatest of all miracles; and without this, all graces perish to a man's self; and without that, all graces are useless unto others.

XIX.

2. Let no minister be governed

by the opinion of his people, and destroy his duty, by unreasonable compliance with their humours; lest as the bishop of Granata told the governors of Leria and Patti; like silly animals, they take burdens upon their backs at the pleasure of the multitude, which they neither can retain with prudence, nor shake off with safety.

XX.

3. Let not the reverence of any man cause you to sin against God; but in the matter of souls, being well-advised, be bold and confident; but abate nothing of the honour of God, or the just measures of your duty, to satisfy the importunity of any man whatsoever: and God will bear you out.

XXI.

4. When you teach your people any part of their duty, as in paying their debts, their tythes and offerings, in giving due reverence and religious regards, diminish nothing of your admonition in these particulars, and the like, tho' they object, That you speak for yourselves, and in your own cases. For a council is not the worse but the better, if it be profitable both to him that gives, and to him that takes it. Only do it in simplicity, and principally intend the good of their souls.

XXII.

5. In taking accounts of the good lives of yourselves, or others,

take your measures by the exprefs words of fcripture; and next to them, eftimate them by their proportion and compliance with the public meafures, with the laws of the nation, ecclefiastical and civil, and by the rules of fame, of public honefty and good report; and laft of all by their obfervation of the ordinances and exterior parts of religion.

XXIII.

6. Be not fatisfied when you have done a good work, unlefs you have alfo done it well: and when you have, then be careful that vain-glory, partiality, felf-conceit, or any other folly or indiscretion, fnatch it not out of

your hand, and cheat you of the reward.

XXIV.

7. Be careful so to order yourself, that you fall not into temptation and folly in the presence of any of your charges; and especially that you fall not into chidings, and intemperate talkings, and sudden and violent expressions: never be a party in clamours and scoldings, lest your calling become useles, and your person contemptible: ever remembering that if you cheaply and lightly be engaged in such low usages with any person, that person is likely to be lost from all possibility of receiving much good from your ministry.

III.

The Rules and Measures of Government to be used by ministers, in their respective cures.

XXV.

I. **U**SE no violence to any man, to bring him to your opinion: but by the word of your proper ministry, by demonstrations of the Spirit, by rational discourses, by excellent examples, constrain them to come in: and for other things, they are to be permitted to their own liberty, to the measures of the laws, and the conduct of their governors.

XXVI.

2. Suffer no quarrel in your parish; and speedily suppress it when it is begun: and though all wise men will abstain from interposing in other men's affairs, and especially in matters of interest, which men love too well, yet it is your duty here to interpose, by persuading them to friendships, reconcilements, moderate prosecutions of their pretences; and by all means you prudently can, to bring them to peace, and brotherly kindness.

XXVII.

3. Suffer no houses of debauchery, of drunkenness or lust, in your parishes; but implore the assistance of authority for the suppress-

ing of all such meeting places, and nurseries of impiety: and as for places of public entertainment, take care that they observe the rules of Christian piety, and the allowed measures of laws.

XXVIII.

4. If there be any Papists, or sectaries in your parishes, neglect not frequently to confer with them in the spirit of meekness, and by the importunity of wise discourses seeking to gain them. But stir up no violences against them; but leave them (if they be incurable) to the wise and merciful disposition of the laws.

XXIX.

5. Receive not the people to

doubtful disputations: and let no names of sects or differing religions, be kept up amongst you, to the disturbance of the public peace, and private charity: and teach not the people to estimate their piety by their distance from any opinion, but by their faith in Christ, their obedience to God, and the laws, and their love to all Christian people, even though they be deceived.

XXX.

6. Think no man considerable upon the point or pretence of a tender conscience, unless he live a good life, and in all things endeavour to approve himself void of offence, both towards God and man: but if he be an humble person,

modest and inquiring, apt to learn, and desirous of information; if he seeks for it in all ways reasonable and pious, and is obedient to laws, then take care of him, use him tenderly, persuade him meekly, reprove him gently, and deal mercifully with him, till God shall reveal that also unto him, in which his unavoidable trouble, and his temptation lies.

XXXI.

7. Mark them that cause divisions among you, and avoid them: for such persons are by the Scripture called *scandals* * in the abstract; they are offenders and offences too. But if any man have an opinion,

* διχόσασίας καὶ τὰ σκάνδαλα παρὰ τὴν διδασχῇ. Vide Rom. xvi. 17.

let him have it to himself, till he can be cured of his disease by time, and counsel, and gentle usages. But if he separates from the Church, or gathers a congregation, he is proud, and is fallen from the communion of saints, and the unity of the Catholick Church.

XXXII.

8. He that observes any of his people to be zealous, let him be careful to conduct that zeal into such channels where there is least danger of inconveniency; let him employ it in something that is good; let it be pressed to fight against sin. For zeal is like a cancer in the breast; feed it with good flesh, or it will devour the heart.

XXXIII.

9. Strive to get the love of the congregation; but let it not degenerate into popularity. Cause them to love you and revere you; to love with religion, not for your compliance; for the good you do them, not for that you please them. Get their love by doing your duty, but not by omitting or spoiling any part of it: ever remembering the severe words of our blessed Saviour, *Woe be to you, when all men speak well of you.*

XXXIV.

10. Suffer not the common people to prattle about religion and questions; but to speak little, to be swift to hear, and slow to

14XXX
speak, that they learn to do good works for necessary uses, that they work with their hands, that they may have wherewithal to give to them that need, that they study to be quiet, and learn to do their own business.

XXXV.

11. Let every minister take care that he call upon his charges, that they order themselves so, that they leave no void spaces of their time; but that every part of it be filled with useful or innocent employment. For where there is a space without business, that space is the proper time for danger and temptation; and no man is more miserable than he that knows not how to spend his time.

XXXVI.

12. Fear no man's person in the doing of your duty, wisely, and according to the laws: remembering always that a servant of God can no more be hurt by all the powers of wickedness, than by the noise of a fly's wing, or the chirping of a sparrow. Brethren, do well for yourselves; do well for yourselves as long as you have time; you know not how soon death will come.

XXXVII.

13. Entertain no persons into your assemblies from other parishes, unless upon great occasion, or in the destitution of a minister, or by contingency, and seldom visits, or with leave: lest the labour

of thy brother be discouraged;
and thyself be thought to preach
Christ out of envy, and not of
good will.

XXXVIII.

14. Never appeal to the judg-
ment of the people in matters of
controverſie; teach them obedi-
ence, not arrogancy; teach them
to be humble, not crafty. But
without the aid of falſe guides,
you will find ſome of them of
themſelves apt enough to be trou-
bleſome: and a queſtion put into
their heads, and a power of judg-
ing into their hands, is a putting
it to their choice, whether you
ſhall be troubled by them this
week, or the next: for much lon-
ger you cannot eſcape.

XXXIX.

14. Let no minister of a parish introduce any ceremony, rites or gestures, though with some seeming piety and devotion, but what are commanded by the Church, and established by law: and let these also be wisely and usefully explicated to the people, that they may understand the reasons and measures of obedience: but let there be no more introduced, lest the people be burdened unnecessarily, and tempted or divided.

IV.

*Rules and advices concerning
Preaching.*

XL.

1. **L**ET every minister be diligent in preaching the word of God, according to the ability that God gives him; ever remembering that to minister God's word unto the people, is the one half of his great office and employment.

XLI.

2. Let every minister be careful, that what he delivers be in-

deed the word of God: that his sermon be answerable to the text; for this is God's word, the other ought to be according to it; that although in itself it be but the word of man, yet by the purpose, truth, and signification of it, it may in a secondary sense be the word of God.

XLII.

3. Do not spend your sermons in general and indefinite things; as in exhortations to the people to get Christ, to be united to Christ, and things of the like unlimited signification; but tell them in every duty, what are the measures, what circumstances, what instruments, and what is the particular minute meaning of every general

advice. For generals not explicated do but fill the people's heads with empty notions, and their mouths with perpetual unintelligible talk: but their hearts remain empty, and themselves are not edified.

XLIII.

4. Let not the humours and inclinations of the people be the measures of your doctrines; but let your doctrines be the measure of their persuasions. Let them know from you what they ought to do; but if you learn from them what you ought to teach, you will give but a very ill account at the day of judgment, of the souls committed to you. He that receives from the people what he shall teach them, is like a nurse

that asks of her sick child, what
physic she shall give him.

XLIV.

5. Every minister in reproofs
of sin and sinners, ought to concern
himself in the faults of them that
are present, but not of the absent;
nor in reproof of the times; for
this can serve no end but of fac-
tion and sedition, public murmur
and private discontent; besides
this, it does nothing but amuse
the people in the faults of others,
teaching them to revile their bet-
ters, and neglect the dangers of
their own souls.

XLV.

6. As it looks like flattery and
design, to preach nothing before

magistrates but the duty of their people, and their own eminency; so it is the beginning of mutiny to preach to the people the duty of their superiors and supreme; it can neither come from a good principle, nor tend to a good end. Every minister ought to preach to his parish, and urge their duty. St. John the baptist told the soldiers what the soldiers should do; but troubled not their heads with what was the duty of the scribes and pharisees.

XLVI.

7. In the reproof of sins be as particular as you please, and spare no mans sin, but meddle with no mans person; neither name any man, nor signify him, neither re-

proach him, nor make him to be suspected: he that does otherwise, makes his sermon to be a libel, and the ministry of repentance, an instrument of revenge; and so doing he shall exasperate the man, but never amend the sinner.

XLVII.

8. Let the business of your sermons be to preach holy life, obedience, peace, love among neighbours, hearty love, to live as the old Christians did, and the new should, to do hurt to no man, to do good to every man. For in these things the honour of God consists, and the kingdom of the Lord Jesus.

XLVIII.

9. Prefs those graces most, that do most good, and make the least noise; such as giving privately, and forgiving publicly; and describe the grace of charity by all the measures of it which are given by the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 13. For this grace is not finished by good words, nor yet by good works, but it is a great building: and many materials go to the structure of it. It is worth your study, for it is the fulfilling of the commandments.

XLIX.

10. Because it is impossible that charity should live, unless the lust of the tongue be mortified:

let every minister in his charge be frequent and severe against flanderers, detractors and backbiters: for the crime of backbiting is the poyson of charity; and yet so common, that it is past into a proverb: [*After a good dinner let us sit down and backbite our neighbours.*]

L.

11. Let every minister be careful to observe, and vehement in reproving those faults of his parishioners, of which the laws cannot or do not take cognizance; such as are, many degrees of intemperate drinkings, gluttony, riotous living, expences above their ability, pride, bragging, lying in ordinary conversation, covetousness, peevishness and hasty anger;

and such like. For the word of God searches deeper than the laws of men; and many things will be hard to prove by the measures of courts, which are easy enough to be observed by the watchful and diligent eye and ear of the guide of souls.

LI.

12. In your sermons to the people, often speak of the four last things, of death and judgment, heaven and hell: of the life and death of Jesus Christ; of God's mercy to repenting sinners, and his severity against the impenitent: of the formidable examples of God's anger pour'd forth upon rebels, sacrilegious, oppressors of widows and orphans, and all persons guilt-

ty of crying sins: These are usefull, safe and profitable; but never run into extravagancies and curiosities, nor trouble yourselves or them with mysterious secrets; for there is more laid before you, than you can understand; and the whole duty of man, is *To fear God and keep his commandments*. Speak but very little of the secret and high things of God; but as much as you can of the lowness and humility of Christ.

LII.

13. Be not hasty in pronouncing damnation against any man or party in a matter of disputation. It is enough that you reprove an error; but what shall be the sentence against it at the day of

judgment, thou knowest not, and therefore pray for the erring person, and reprove him; but leave the sentence to his Judge.

LIII.

14. Let your sermons teach the duty of all states of men to whom you speak: and particularly, take care of servants and hirelings, merchants and tradesmen, that they be not unskilful, nor unadmonished in their respective duties: and in all things speak usefully and affectionately; for by this means you will provide for all mens needs; both for them that sin by reason of their little understanding, and them that sin because they have evil, dull, or deprav'd affections.

LIV.

15. In your sermons and discourses of religion, use primitive, known and accustomed words; and affect not new phantastical or schismatical terms: Let the Sunday festival be called the Lords day; and pretend no fears from the common use of words amongst Christians. For they that make a business of the words of common use, and reform religion by introducing a new word, intend to make a change but no amendment; they spend themselves in trifles, like the barren turf that sends forth no medicinal herbs, but store of mushrooms; and they give a demonstration that they are either impertinent people, or else

of a quarrelous nature; and that they are ready to disturb the church, if they could find occasion.

LV.

16. Let every minister in his charge, as much as he can, endeavour to destroy all popular errors, and evil principles taken up by his people or others with whom they converse: especially those that directly oppose the indispensable necessity of a holy life: let him endeavour to understand in what true and useful sense Christ's active obedience is imputed to us; let him make his people fear the deferring of their repentance, and putting it off to their death-bed; let him explicate the nature of faith, so that it be an active and quick-

ning principle of charity; let him as much as he may take from them all confidencies that slacken their obedience and diligence; let him teach them to impute all their sins to their own follies and evil choice, and so build them up in a most holy faith to a holy life: ever remembering that in all ages it hath been the greatest artifice of Satan, to hinder the increase of Christ's Kingdom, by destroying those things in which it does consist, viz. peace and righteousness, holiness and mortification.

LVI.

17. Every minister ought to be careful that he never expound scripture in public, contrary to the known sense of the Catholick

Church, and particularly of the Churches of England and Ireland; nor introduce any doctrine against any of the four first general councils: for these as they are measures of truth, so also, of necessity; that is, as they are safe, so they are sufficient; and besides what is taught by these, no matter of belief is necessary to salvation.

LVII.

18. Let no preacher bring before the people in his sermons or discourses, the arguments of great and dangerous heresies, though with a purpose to confute them; for they will much easier retain the objection, than understand the answer.

LVIII.

19. Let not the preacher make an article of faith to be a matter of dispute; but teach it with plainness and simplicity, and confirm it with easy arguments and plain words of scripture; but without objection: let them be taught to believe, but not to argue: lest if the arguments meet with a scrupulous person, it rather shake the foundation by curious inquiry, than establish it by arguments too hard.

LIX.

20. Let the preacher be careful that in his sermons he use no light, immodest or ridiculous expressions; but what is wise, grave,

useful and for edification; that when the preacher brings truth and gravity, the people may attend with fear and reverence.

LX.

21. Let no preacher envy any man that hath a greater audience, or more fame in preaching than himself; let him not detract from him, or lessen his reputation directly or indirectly: for he that cannot be even with his brother but by pulling him down, is but a dwarf still; and no man is the better for making his brother worse. In all things desire that Christ's Kingdom may be advanced; and rejoice that he is serv'd, whoever be the minister: that if you cannot have the fame of a

great preacher, yet you may have the reward of being a good man : but it is hard to miss both.

LXI.

22. Let every preacher in his parish take care to explicate to the people the mysteries of the great festivals ; as of Christmas, Easter, Ascension day, Whitfunday, Trinity Sunday, the Annunciation of the blessed Virgin Mary ; because these feasts containing in them the great fundamentals of our faith, will with most advantage convey the mysteries to the people, and fix them in their memories, by the solemnity and circumstances of the day.

LXII.

23. In all your sermons and discourses, speak nothing of God but what is honourable and glorious; and impute not to him such things, the consequents of which a wise and good man will not own: never suppose him to be the author of sin, or the procurer of our damnation. For *God cannot be tempted, neither tempteth he any man. God is true, and every man a liar.*

LXIII.

24. Let no preacher compare one ordinance with another; as prayer with preaching, to the disparagement of either; but use both in their proper seasons, and

according to appointed order.

LXIV.

25. Let no man preach for the praise of men: but if you meet it, instantly watch and stand upon your guard, and pray against your own vanity; and by an express act of acknowledgement and adoration, return the praise to God. Remember that Herod was for the omission of this, smitten by an Angel; and do thou tremble, fearing lest the judgment of God be otherwise than the sentence of the people.

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V.

*Rules and Advices concerning
Catechism.*

LXV.

1. **E**VERY minister is bound upon every Lord's day, before evening prayer, to instruct all young people in the creed, the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments, and the doctrine of the sacraments, as they are set down and explicated in the church catechism.

LXVI.

2. Let a bell be tolled when the catechising is to begin; that all

who desire it may be present; but let all the more ignorant, and uninstructed part of the people, whether they be old or young, be requir'd to be present: that no person in your parishes be ignorant in the foundations of religion: ever remembering, that if in these things they be unskilful, whatever is taught besides, is like a house built upon the sand.

LXVII.

3. Let every minister teach his people the use, practice, methods and benefits of meditation or mental prayer. Let them draw out for them helps and rules for their assistance in it; and furnish them with materials, concerning the life and death of the ever blessed Je-

ful, the greatness of God, our own meanness, the dreadful sound of the last trumpet, the infinite event of the two last sentences at doomsday: let them be taught to consider what they have been, what they are, and what they shall be; and above all things, what are the issues of eternity; glories never to cease, pains never to be ended.

LXVIII.

4. Let every minister exhort his people to a frequent confession of their sins: and a declaration of the state of their souls; to a conversation with their minister in spiritual things, to an enquiry concerning all the parts of their duty: for by preaching, and catechising, and private intercourse, all the

needs of souls can best be serv'd;
but by preaching alone, they cannot.

LXIX.

5. Let the people be exhorted to keep fasting days, and the feasts of the church; according to their respective capacities; so it be done without burden to them, and without becoming a snare; that is, that upon the account of religion, and holy desires to please God, they spend some time in religion, besides the Lord's day: but be very careful that the Lord's day be kept religiously, according to the severest measures of the church, and the commands of authority: ever remembering that as they give but little testimony of repentance and

mortification, who never fast; so they give but small evidence of their joy in God and religion, who are unwilling solemnly to partake of the publick and religious joys of the Christian Church.

LXX

6. Let every minister be diligent in exhorting all parents and masters to send their children and servants to the Bishop at the visitation, or other solemn times of his coming to them, that they may be confirm'd: and let him also take care that all young persons may by understanding the principles of religion, their vow to baptism, the excellency of the Christian religion, the necessity and advantages of it, and of living accor-

ding to it, be fitted and disposed,
and accordingly by them present-
ed to the Bishop, that he may pray
over them, and invoke the Holy
Spirit, and minister the holy rite
of confirmation.

VI.

Rules and Advices concerning the Visitation of the Sick.

LXXI.

1. **E**VERY minister ought to be careful in visiting all the sick and afflicted persons of his parish: ever remembering that, as the priests lips are to preserve knowledge: so it is his duty to minister a word of comfort in the time of need.

LXXII.

2. A Minister must not stay till he be sent for; but of his own ac-

cord and care to go to them; to examine them, to exhort them to perfect their repentance, to strengthen their faith, to encourage their patience, to perswade them to resignation, to the renewing of their holy vows, to the love of God, to be reconcil'd to their neighbours, to make restitution and amends, to confess their sins, to settle their estate, to provide for their charges, to do acts of piety and charity; and above all things, that they take care, they do not sin towards the end of their lives. For if repentance on our death-bed seem so very late for the sins of our life; what time shall be left to repent us of the sins we commit on our death-bed?

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LXXIII.

3. When you comfort the afflicted, endeavour to bring them to the true love of God: for he that serves God for God's sake, it is almost impossible he should be oppressed with sorrow.

LXXIV.

4. In answering the cases of conscience of sick or afflicted people, consider not who asks, but what he asks; and consult in your answers more with the estate of his soul, than the conveniency of his estate: for no flattery is so fatal as that of the physician or the divine.

LXXV.

5. If the sick person enquires concerning the final estate of his soul; he is to be reprov'd rather than answer'd; only he is to be call'd upon to finish his duty, to do all the good he can in that season; to pray for pardon and acceptance; but you have nothing to do to meddle with passing final sentences; neither cast him down in despair, nor raise him up to vain and unreasonable confidences. But take care that he be not carelessly dismissed.

LXXVI.

6. In order to these and many other good purposes, every minister ought frequently to converse

with his parishioners; to go to their houses, but always publickly, with witness, and with prudence; lest what is charitably intended be scandalously reported; and in all your conversation be sure to give good example, and upon all occasions to give good counsel.

For; to pray for pardon and reconciliation; but you have nothing to do to meddle with passing final sentences; neither call him down in despair, nor raise him up to vain and unreasonable confidence. But take care that he be not carelessly dismissed.

LXXVI

6. In order to these and many other good purposes, every minister ought frequently to converse

VII.

*Of ministring the Sacraments, publick
Prayers, and other duties of
Ministers.*

LXXVII.

I. **E**VERY minister is obliged, publicly or privately to read the common prayers every day in the week, at morning and evening: and in great towns and populous places conveniently inhabited, it must be read in churches; that the daily sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving may never cease.

LXXVIII.

2. The minister is to instruct

the people, that the baptism of their children ought not to be ordinarily defer'd, longer than till the next Sunday after the birth of the child: lest importune and unnecessary delay, occasion that the child die before it is dedicated to the service of God and the religion of the Lord Jesus; before it be born again, admitted to the promises of the Gospel, and reckoned in the account of the second Adam.

LXXIX.

3. Let every minister exhort and press the people to a devout and periodical communion, at the least three times in the year, at the great festivals: but the devouter sort, and they who have leisure, are

to be invited to a frequent communion: and let it be given and received with great reverence.

LXXX.

4. Every minister ought to be well skill'd and studied in saying his office, in the rubricks, the canons, the articles, and the homilies of the Church, that he may do his duty readily, discreetly, gravely, and by the publick measures of the laws. To which also it is very useful that it be added, that every minister study the antient canons of the Church; especially the penitentials of the eastern and western Churches: let him read good books, such as are approved by publick authority; such which are useful, wise and holy: not the

scriblings of unlearned parties, but of men learned, pious, obedient and disinterested; and amongst these, such especially which describe duty and good life, which minister to faith and charity, to piety and devotion; cases of conscience, and solid expositions of scripture. Concerning which, learned and wise persons are to be consulted.

LXXXI.

5. Let not a curate of souls trouble himself with any studies, but such which concern his own or his peoples duty; such as may enable him to speak well, and to do well; but to meddle with no controversies; but such by which he may be enabled to convince

the gainfayers in things that concern publick peace and a good life.

LXXXII.

6. Be careful in all the publick administrations of your parish, that the poor be provided for. Think it no shame to beg for Christ's poor members: stir up the people to liberal alms by your word and your example. Let a collection be made every Lord's day, and upon all solemn meetings, and at every communion; and let the collection be wisely and piously administred: ever remembering, that at the day of judgement nothing shall publickly be proclaimed, but the reward of alms and mercy.

LXXXIII.

7. Let every minister be sure to lay up a treasure of comforts and advices, to bring forth for every man's need in the day of his trouble; let him study and heap together instruments and advices for the promoting of every virtue, and remedies and arguments against every vice; let him teach his people to make acts of virtue not only by external exercise, but also in the way of prayer, and internal meditation.

In these and all things else that concern the minister's duty, if there be difficulty, you are to repair to your bishop for farther advice, assistance and information.

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